

Medical-Legal Partnership Learning Session set for May 4 at Jackson Medical Mall

April 19, 2016

The Mississippi Access to Justice Commission, Mississippi State Department of Health's Office of Health Disparity Elimination and the Mississippi Center for Justice will host a Medical-Legal Partnership Learning Session on May 4 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center Conference Room at the Jackson Medical Mall, 350 West Woodrow Wilson Avenue in Jackson. The session will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 1 p.m.

Members of the media are welcome to attend.

The purpose of the learning session is to bring together medical and legal professionals to consider how they can collaborate to better address the issues faced by low-income citizens of Mississippi. A "medical-legal partnership," MLP, is a partnership that integrates the expertise of healthcare, public health and legal professionals and staff to address and prevent health-harming social and legal needs for patients and clients. More than 275 health institutions partner with legal professionals throughout the nation to address the economic and social conditions that influence the health of people and communities.

The agenda for the Learning Session will be as follows:

- at 9:15 a.m., Corey D. Wiggins, director of Hope Policy Institute, will discuss the impact of the social determinants of health on low-income communities in Mississippi;
- at 9:45 a.m., Ellen Lawton, lead research scientist and director of the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership, will explain how the health care and legal professions can and should work together;
- at 11 a.m., several providers will discuss the types of free legal services they provide to low-income Mississippians;
- at noon, Linda Dixon Rigsby, health law director of the Mississippi Center for Justice, Courtney Choi Hunt, staff attorney with the Mississippi Center for Justice, and Dr. Leandro Mena, medical director of the Center for Health for Minority Men and director of the Center for HIV/AIDS Research, Education and Policy, will present on the HIV/AIDS Justice Project MLP at the Mississippi Center for Justice. Dr. Carrie Brown, medical director for the Palliative Care Team at Arkansas Children's Hospital and Anna Strong, executive director of Child Advocacy and Public Health at Arkansas Children's Hospital, will also discuss the Arkansas Children's Hospital MLP that has been in existence for eight years.

The desire of both professions to reach those in need has been a driving force for these partnerships. "We have a shared goal of seeing people healthy and well, and the health care and legal fields each have their own strengths and limitations. By working together, we can help our patients and clients more effectively," said Courtney Choi Hunt, staff attorney with the Mississippi Center for Justice, the only organization in Mississippi with an MLP.

For more information about the Learning Session, contact Tiffany Graves, executive director of the Access to Justice Commission, at 601-960-9581.

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